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The **COMMITTEE** to whom was referred sundry Letters and Papers relative to Commercial Matters, submit the following circular Letter and Resolves.

THE trust reposed in Congress, renders it their duty to be attentive to the conduct of foreign nations, and to prevent or restrain as far as may be, all such proceedings as might prove injurious to the United States.

The delicate situation of commerce at this time, claims the attention of the several states; and it will be admitted that few objects of greater importance can present themselves to their notice. The fortune of every citizen is interested in the fate of commerce: for it is the constant source of industry and wealth; and the value of our produce and our land must ever rise or fall in proportion to the prosperous or adverse state of trade.

Already has Great-Britain attempted a monopoly which is destructive of our trade with her West-India Islands. There was reason to expect that a measure so unequal, and so little calculated to promote mercantile intercourse, would not be persevered in by an enlightened nation : but the measure seems to be growing into a system, and if it should be attended with success, there is too much reason to apprehend other nations might follow the example, and the commerce of America become the victim of illiberal policy.

It would have been the duty of Congress, as it was their wish, at an earlier period to have met the attempts of Great-Britain with similar and adequate restrictions on her commerce, but their powers on this head were not explicit; and though they are not to suppose that a free people would be jealous of men whom they chuse from year to year to consult and

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guard their interest, yet it is with reluctance that Congress now make a proposition which may be suspected to have originated in a desire of power, although the measures already adopted by the legislatures of the several states seem to render it their duty to take the general sense of the union on this subject.

It will certainly be admitted, that unless the United States can act as a nation and be regarded as such by foreign powers, and unless Congress for this purpose shall be vested with powers competent to the protection of commerce, they can never command reciprocal advantages in trade; and without such reciprocity, our foreign commerce must decline and eventually be annihilated.

That the United States may be enabled to secure such terms of equality in their commerce with foreign nations, is the object of this address; and it will appear by the papers herewith transmitted, that however desirous some of the states may be, that further powers should be vested in Congress for the external regulation of trade, much time and many valuable opportunities might be lost before any thing effective could be done, considering the vague and different powers that are proposed to be given by different states. Hence it seems necessary that the states should be explicit, and fix on some particular mode by which foreign commerce not founded on principles of reciprocity, may be restrained. Imposts or duties have been the general instruments for effecting this purpose, but Congress have agreed to recommend another measure which is more simple, equally effective, and may be less exceptionable: For this purpose they have

Resolved, That it be recommended to the legislatures of the several states, to vest the United States in Congress assembled, for the term of years, with power to prohibit any goods, wares or merchandise from being imported into any of the states, except in vessels belonging to and navigated by citizens of the United States, or the subjects of foreign powers with whom the United States may have treaties of commerce.

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Resolved, That it be recommended to the legislatures of the several states, to vest the United States in Congress assembled, for the term of years, with the power of prohibiting the subjects of any foreign state, kingdom or empire, from importing into the United States, any goods, wares or merchandise, unless such as are the produce or manufacture of that state, kingdom or empire whose subjects they are.